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5 Oct Camp

[Panama: Shooting occurred last night in Panama City following the formal installation of the provisional junta and cabinet, and new clashes between Arias forces and the national guard may erupt today.

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Arias yesterday issued a highly inflammatory statement, which may have been broadcast clandestinely, for his followers to take up arms against the guard. In addition, leaflets were circulating urging people to go into the streets. Some reports indicate that Arias supporters hope to organize disturbances or a general strike today. Communist elements probably would join in any violent action, but they are remaining aloof for the time being until other forces take the initiative. In the past, efforts by Arias to foment a general strike have failed.

[redacted] guardsmen moved quickly over the weekend to round up potential troublemakers. Patrols entered the university and confiscated materials for molotov cocktails. Junta forces can be expected to take harsh action against student militants who try to precipitate disorders.

Efforts by the military leaders to seek the cooperation of as many parties as possible have continued, as they attempt to cloak their take-over with a semblance of broadly based popular support. Most members of Arias' National Union coalition, however, are reluctant to desert the ousted president until it appears clear that he will not return to power.

If the provisional military junta manages to make its authority stick, as now seems probable, Arias' partners probably will switch their support to gain some voice in the new government. [redacted]

14 Oct 68

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10

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